

# TREATMENT of EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS (MISCARRIAGE): MEDICATION

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Pills called mifepristone and misoprostol can help an early pregnancy loss to end faster.

## HOW WELL DOES THE MEDICATION WORK?

These pills work 84% of the time to complete the miscarriage within two days and 89% of the time within a week. If you can't get mifepristone, misoprostol works 67% of the time within two days and 84% of the time within a week when used alone.

## IS IT SAFE?

Yes, pills for pregnancy loss are safe. Using pills does not lower your chance of getting pregnant again.

## WHAT DO I DO?

1. You will get one tablet of 200 mg mifepristone at your clinician's office. You can swallow this pill in the office or at home.
2. About 24 hours after taking the mifepristone, use the misoprostol at home. **Choose a time when you have had a good meal and plenty of rest.**
3. Swallow ibuprofen (600 mg total) one hour before using the misoprostol. This will help with side effects.
4. Wash your hands and lie down. **Place 4 misoprostol pills in your vagina at the same time.** It doesn't matter where in the vagina you put the pills. Each misoprostol pill contains 200 micrograms.
5. Keep lying down for 30 minutes.
6. After 30 minutes, you can move around as usual. If the tablets come out after 30 minutes, it is OK. Your body has absorbed the medication.

If you do not start to bleed within 24 hours, you can use 4 more misoprostol pills.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Cramps and bleeding with clots: The cramps and bleeding may be stronger than your normal period. The cramps usually start 2-4 hours after you insert the misoprostol pills in your vagina and may last 3-5 hours. **This heavy bleeding is not risky.** It means the pills are working. The bleeding often lasts 1-2 weeks, and may stop and start a few times.
- Nausea, diarrhea, or chills: These symptoms should get better a few hours after using the pills and should not last longer than 24 hours.

## WHAT CAN I TAKE FOR PAIN?

- **Medicine:**
  - Take ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) 600 mg every 8 hours as needed for pain. Take this with food to avoid an upset stomach.
  - Your clinician may give you a stronger, narcotic pain medicine. You can use this if you still have pain after taking ibuprofen. Follow the directions on the label.
- **Comfort:** A hot pack may help with cramps. You can also drink some hot tea. Rest in a soothing place.

## WHAT IF IT TAKES TOO LONG OR DOESN'T WORK?

If it doesn't work or you feel it is taking too long, you can return to your clinician's office for a suction procedure or try the pills again.

## WHEN SHOULD I CALL OR RETURN TO MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER?

- If the bleeding becomes very heavy and soaks through more than 2 maxi pads per hour for 2 hours in a row
- If you have a fever over 101°F (38.3°C)
- If you start to feel very ill

Let your clinicians know if you need help. No question is too small. Your clinician knows this may be a tough time for you and you have received a lot of instructions. Keep a follow-up visit with your clinician.

## HOW SOON CAN I GET PREGNANT AGAIN?

You can get pregnant soon after the pregnancy loss ends. If you want to try again, take a prenatal vitamin daily. If you are not ready to be pregnant at this time, please see your clinician for your birth control options.

## FEELINGS AFTER EARLY PREGNANCY LOSS

**Please understand that nothing you did caused the pregnancy loss.** An early pregnancy loss is nature's way of ending a pregnancy that would not be healthy. It is **NOT** caused by stress, sports, food, or sex.

Sometimes families and friends don't know what to say to help. If you feel very upset, you should let your clinician know and get the help you need.